

What is Sociology?

Professor Carian



Agenda

- What is Sociology?
- What do sociologists study?

What you should know by the end of class...

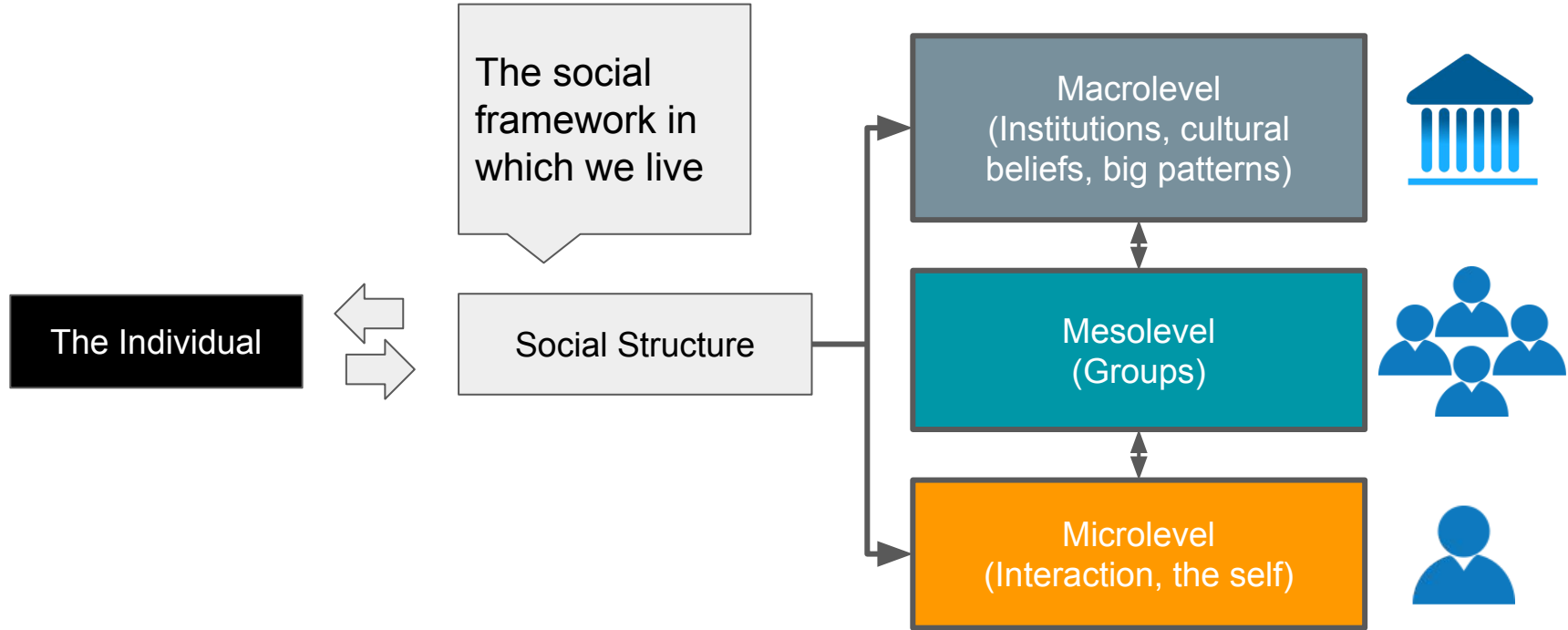
- Sociologists study the social world.
- The social structure is the social framework in which we live, and it is made up of the microlevel, the mesolevel, and the macrolevel.
- Sociologists emphasize the power of the social structure over the individual and their agency.

What is Sociology?



- The study of...
 - The social world
 - Social facts
 - Social patterns
 - Social structure
- A science

How do sociologists think about society?



How do sociologists think about society?

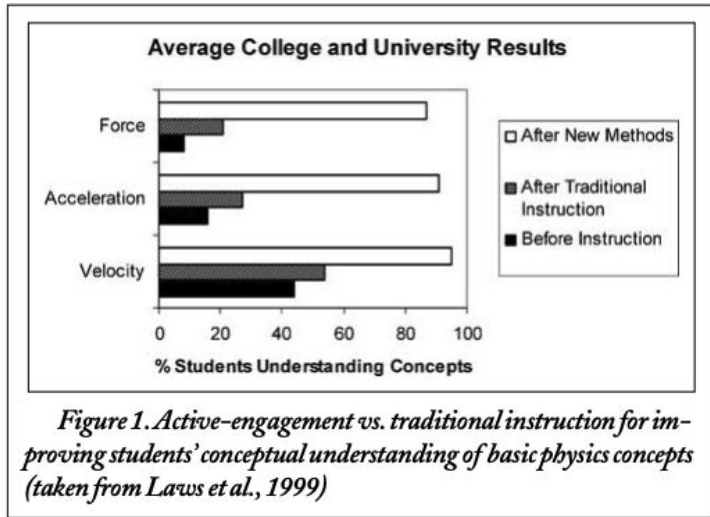


Sociologists study...

Groups Culture Inequalities
Social Change
Institutions Networks
Interaction Identities

How do we learn?

Research shows that active learning, or activities that promote student engagement, are more effective than traditional lecture.



Reference	Learning Outcome	Effect Size
Johnson, Johnson and Smith [12]	Improved academic achievement	0.64
	Improved quality of interpersonal interactions	0.60
	Improved self-esteem	0.44
	Improved perceptions of greater social support	0.70
Johnson, Johnson and Smith [13]	Improved academic achievement	0.53
	Improved liking among students	0.55
	Improved self-esteem	0.29
	Improved perceptions of greater social support	0.51
Springer et al. [43]	Improved academic achievement	0.51
	Improved student attitudes	0.55
	Improved retention in academic programs	0.46

Table 1. Collaborative vs. individualistic learning: Reported effect size of the improvement in different learning outcomes.

What do sociologists study?

Read the abstract (a summary of the whole paper) and the introduction (the section that comes after the abstract and ends at the first new section title)



Stone et al 2022



Hackett and Tong 2025



Dahlin 2025

Talk with your partner

- What was the author's / authors' research question?
- What level of the social structure (macro, meso, or micro, or more than one) were the author(s) studying?
- How does this paper show the power of social structure over agency?

Be prepared to share!



7:00